United Nations A/C.4/55/SR.1

General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
15 September 2000

Original: English

Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 1st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 5 September 2000, at 4.30 p.m.

Temporary Chairman: Mr. Holkeri (President of the General Assembly) ..... (Finland)

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Election of the Chairman

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00-63046 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 4.30 p.m.

Election of the Chairman

1. **Mr. Zakheos** (Cyprus) nominated Mr. Semakula Kiwanuka (Uganda) for the office of Chairman.

2. In the absence of further nominations and in accordance with rule 103 of the rules of procedure **the Temporary Chairman** said he would take it that the Committee wished to elect Mr. Semakula Kiwanuka (Uganda) Chairman.

3. *Mr. Semakula Kiwanuka (Uganda) was elected Chairman by acclamation.*

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.

United Nations A/C.4/55/SR.2

General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
25 September 2000

Original: English

Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 2nd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 13 September 2000, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Kiwanuka ..... (Uganda)

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00-64052 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Election of officers

1. **The Chairman** said that he had received the nomination of Mr. Lewis (Antigua and Barbuda) for one of the posts of Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

2. *Mr. Lewis (Antigua and Barbuda) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.*

3. **The Chairman** said that, since the consultations on the nominations for the posts of the other Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur were ongoing, the remaining elections would take place at a later meeting.

Organization of work (A/C.4/55/1; A/C.4/55/L.1)

4. **The Chairman** drew the attention of the Committee to document A/C.4/55/1, containing a letter from the President of the General Assembly addressed to the Chairman informing him that the General Assembly had decided to allocate 14 items to the Fourth Committee for its consideration. The Committee also had before it document A/C.4/55/L.1, containing the proposed programme of work and timetable prepared by the Chairman in accordance with related decisions of the General Assembly.

5. In order to make full use of the conference services made available to the Committee, he intended to convene meetings promptly. During the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly, the Committee had lost 21 hours of meeting time owing to late starts and early adjournments, and its conference services utilization factor of 74 per cent had fallen below the benchmark figure of 80 per cent established by the Committee on Conferences. He invited the cooperation of all delegations to enable the Committee to conduct its work with the greatest possible efficiency.

6. In view of the number of agenda items before the Committee and the limited number of meetings available, he suggested that statements made in the general debate should not exceed 10 minutes in length, or 15 minutes for statements made on behalf of a group of delegations. Statements made in exercise of the right of reply, explanations of vote and points of order should be limited to five minutes. Lastly, he drew attention to paragraphs 6 to 10, 12, 17 and 32 of General Assembly decision 34/401 on rationalization of the procedures and organization of the General Assembly.

7. **Mr. Zahid** (Morocco) said that a non-paper on the proposed medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005 had been circulated to members and he asked when it would be considered in the Committee. With regard to time limits, some limit should be set for statements by petitioners, as well. Since it was the practice of the Committee to schedule its meetings so that they would not overlap with those meetings of the First Committee, he enquired whether the Committee could begin to meet earlier than its scheduled date of 25 September.

8. **The Chairman** said that, if the Committee so wished, one meeting would be convened during the week beginning Monday, 2 October 2000, for an exchange of views on the proposed medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005. The issue of a time limit for statements by petitioners would be considered at a later date.

9. **Mr. Sattar** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the General Assembly had decided that the First Committee and the Fourth Committee should not meet simultaneously. The Committee's programme of work had been drawn up in close coordination with the secretariat of the First Committee and taking into account such factors as availability of conference facilities and documentation. In that connection he noted that the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples would not be available until 15 September. It would not therefore be practicable for the Committee to begin its substantive work prior to 25 September.

10. **Mr. Pérez** (Dominican Republic) said that his delegation supported the view that the Committee should hold substantive meetings earlier than 25 September. The necessary documentation should be made available in good time. It was for the Secretariat to endeavour to meet the needs of the Committee, not the other way round.

11. **Mr. Zahid** (Morocco) said that, in the past, informal consultations on disarmament issues had been convened immediately after the completion of the work of the First Committee. He was concerned that the Fourth Committee would be taking up agenda item 87, questions relating to information, and agenda item 86, comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects, at the same time as those important consultations were taking place. He had been informed that the report of the

Special Committee on Decolonization was already available in the six official languages, but had yet to be issued as an official document, and asked why that process could not be expedited.

12. **Mr. Sattar** (Secretary of the Committee) said that documents were processed on a first come first served basis. The report of the Special Committee had been submitted for processing in good time, within one week of the conclusion of the work of that body. It would not be possible either to defer or bring forward consideration of agenda items 87 and 86, which was currently scheduled for 6 to 9 November, because of lack of availability of conference facilities at other times, undertakings regarding scheduling given to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the requirement that the Fourth Committee should complete its work by 9 November.

13. **Mr. Donigi** (Papua New Guinea), speaking in his capacity as Chairman of the Special Committee on Decolonization, said that it was important, in deciding on the timetable for the Fourth Committee's work, to ensure that members had sufficient time to acquaint themselves with the content of the report of the Special Committee, which was very voluminous, before taking decisions that would affect the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Also, a number of representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories wished to address the Fourth Committee and had arranged to be in New York on 25 September for that purpose.

14. **The Chairman** drew attention to paragraph 31 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 51/241, which stated that the Main Committees should meet in substantive session only after the end of the general debate.

15. **Mr. Musonda** (Zambia) urged the Committee to approve the programme of work and timetable contained in document A/C.4/55/L.1.

16. **Mr. Hughes** (New Zealand) said that he agreed that delegations must have sufficient time to prepare for the general debate on agenda items 18, 88, 89, 90 and 12 and 91.

17. **The Chairman** said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee approved the programme of work and timetable contained in document A/C.4/55/L.1.

18. *It was so decided.*

19. **The Chairman** said that the General Assembly had decided that bodies and individuals having an interest in agenda item 51, question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), would be heard in the Fourth Committee in conjunction with the consideration of the item in plenary meeting. With regard to agenda item 83, international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, he suggested that, as in previous years, the Committee should establish an open-ended working group of the whole chaired by Chile to prepare a draft resolution.

20. *It was so decided.*

21. **The Chairman** indicated the deadlines for placing names on the list of speakers for the general debate, which would cover agenda items 18, 88, 89, 90 and 12 and 91, as well as for submitting draft resolutions and proposals relating to those items. At previous sessions, the Committee had considered the chapter of the report of the Special Committee on Decolonization relating to military activities in Non-Self-Governing Territories in conjunction with the item on economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. He said that he took it that the Committee wished to follow the same procedure at the current session.

22. *It was so decided.*

23. **The Chairman** said that, as in previous years, the Fifth Committee expected members of the Fourth Committee to submit their views or comments on the proposed medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005 and its revisions. He suggested that the Committee should convene one meeting during the week beginning Monday, 2 October 2000, for an exchange of views on that document.

24. *It was so decided.*

25. **Mr. Mekdad** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, at previous sessions, there had been delays in the issuance of the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories. He urged the Secretariat to ensure that, at the current session, the report was issued in a timely fashion in all six official languages.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.